including the agency which the hon. Member referred to. And we are addressing the problem in two ways. It is becoming difficult to provide the direct assistance from the Market Development Fund because that Fund is getting reduced because of the budgetary constraints. But about the type of facilities for some sort of transport subsidy, subsidy to build up the cold storage or to extend the post-harvesting technology to farmers, to horticulture and fruit products, we are trying to address this problem through another scheme which is known as the Small Farmers Agro-business Consortium, which is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 682.

Excluding Income Tax payers from the purview of PDS in States

*682. SHRI PASUMPON THA KIRUTTINAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) The names of the States where Income Tax payers have been excluded from the purview of the Public Distribution System;

(b) the saving in subsidy every month as a result thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to treat all the State and Union Territories at the same footing in the matter of availing of the Public Distribution System; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons for this discriminatory treatment to the Income Tax payers in some States only?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI A. K. ANTHONY): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The Governments of Gujarat, Haryana and Rajasthan have reported that certain categories of consumers in their States have been excluded from eligibility for supply of wheat and rice through the Public Distribution System (PDS). Only Income Tax payers are excluded on a voluntary disclosure basis in Rajasthan. Government of Gujarat has reported that Income Tax payers, Sales Tax assessees, farmers other than small and marginal farmers and persons having an annual income exceeding Rs. 28,000 are not eligible for PDS foodgrains in the State. Government of Haryana has reported exclusion of certain categories namely, Income Tax payers, Ministers, MLAs, Class I and Class II Officers of the Government from the entitlement to wheat, rice and sugar through the PDS. Governments of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have also reported that they have implemented a dual ration card system under which the poor are being supplied PDS foodgrains at prices which are specially subsidised by the State Governments.

Decisions regarding eligibility criteria issue of ration cards and other operational matters relating to the PDS are taken by the State Governments/UT Administrations under the present system of joint responsibility for implementing the PDS. The Central Government arranges for the procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of PDS commodities to the States/UTs. All the States and Union Territories are treated on an equal footing by the Central Government and allocations of rice and wheat for the PDS are made from month to month based on availability of stocks in the Central Pool, *inter-se* requirements of States/UTs, seasonal factors etc.

The Advisory Council on PDS in which the Ministers in charge

of Food & Civil Supplies Departments in the State Governments/ UT Administrations are Members had in its 14th meeting held on 28-7-92 had resolved that there was a need to ensure supply of larger and more meaningful quantities of PDS commodities to the needy and deserving sections of the society. The exclusion of certain categories of consumers in some of the States mentioned above is in accordance with the resolution of the Advisory Council on PDS. The intention is, therefore, to improve the quantities made available to the poorer sections of the society and not to save on subsidy.

SHRI PASUMPON THA. KIRUTTINAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have carefully gone through the statement given by the hon. Minister. He has said that decisions regarding eligibility criteria, issue of ration cards and other operational matters relating to the PDS are taken by the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations under the present system of joint responsibility for implementing the PDS. Sir, in this connection, I would like to stress that the Central Government should not shirk its responsibility. They should come to the rescue of the States. Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether this decision was taken after consulting the recognised political parties because there was an all-party meeting convened by the Minister in which it was represented that a decision about the exclusion of certain categories from the PDS should be taken after consultation with the recognised political parties. I want to know whether this decision was taken after consulting the recognised political parties. If not, why not ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Sir, the Central Government has so far not taken any decision to exclude any section of the population from the benefit of PDS. But, as per the decision taken in the 14th meeting of the PDS Advisory Council, there was a resolution, as I said in the answer, that hereafter, the Government should try to increase the allocation to the really needy and poorer sections of the population from the PDS. Naturally, when we are trying to increase the PDS allocation to the poorer sections, some sections will have to be excluded So, it is now for the State Governments; the State Governments can take a decision on their own. But as a national policy, so far we have not taken a decision. But we are having a report from the PDS Advisory Council about that. That report is under the consideration of the Central Government.

SHRI PASUMPON THA. KIRUTTINAN : Though I am not agreeable at this stage that certain categories are to be excluded from the purview of the PDS, Sir, I would like to say that this PDS was mooted originally to stabilise the price line. This is very important. Now that motto, that principle has been circumvented and different, meanings have been given to it. When the Government of India takes a decision on the basis of income, the income of the head of the family alone should not be taken into consideration. The per capita income of the family should be taken into consideration. Then only the whole family, which depends upon the head of the family, will get the benefit. So I would like to know from the Minister whether the per capita income of the whole family will be taken into consideration while taking a decision.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : The Government of India has so far not taken any decision about the recommendations of the PDS Advisory Council or the Committee of Ministers. As things are under the consideration of the Government of India, the Members' suggestions also will be taken note of.

SHRI SANATAN BISI : I want to know from the Minister regarding the State of Orissa. The State of Orissa should be included. I want to know whether any proposals have been received from the State of Orissa in this respect.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : All the State Governments are free to take a decision regarding elibility. If the Government of Orissa wants to exclude any section, they are free to do it: we have no objection to that.

MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE : Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the Government has finally decided to exclude income tax payers from the purview of the Public Distributilon System and, if so, when the Government has taken the decision, when they are going to implement it and what the reaction of the State Governments is.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Already, in the country there is a growing demand that the PDS should be targeted to the poor and needy sections of the population. As a result, Government also realized that the demand is growing. So, in the PDS Advisory Council there was a unanimous decision that we should study all aspects of it. Therefore, the PDS Advisory Committee appointed a Committee of Ministers. They have studied about the national policy of PDS and their report is under the consideration of the Government. Now some of the State Governments, on their own, have taken a decision to exclude certain sections, including income tax payers, from the benefit of the PDS. All the State Governments are free to take any decision regarding exclusion of any affluent sections from the benefit of the PDS. As regards the national policy. so far we have not taken any decision. It is under the active consideration of the Government of India.

श्री जनार्दन यादव : सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि बिहार राज्य में आयकर-दाता की संख्या कितनी है जिनके कार्ड कैंसिल कर दिये गये हैं ? क्या सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली में सब राशनकार्ड रखने वालों को राशन मिल रहा है ? कितने आयकरदाताओं की छटनी हुई है जिनके राशनकार्ड कैंसिल किये गये हैं ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : According to our information, no income tax payer is excluded from the benefit of the PDS in Bihar.

श्री जनार्दन यादव : आपके आदेश का अनुपालन नहीं हो रहा है इसके लिए आप क्या करने जा रहे हैं ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : We have not given any instructions to any State Government to exclude any section from the benefit of the PDS. At the moment all the State Governments are entitled—they have the right—to exclude any section from the benefit of the PDS, if they feel that they are affluent. The question of the Central Government giving instructions will come when the Government takes a decision on the national policy of PDS. That question is still under the active consideration of the Government of India.

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय : माननीय सभापति जी, सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली में जिनके पास राशन कार्ड है उनको चीनी गेहूं, चावल और मिट्टी का तेल मिलने की व्यवस्था है लेकिन चीनी की हालत यह है कि बाजार से बिल्कुल गायब है और खुले बाजार में 20 रुपये, 21 रुपये चीनी मिल रही है । उत्तर प्रदेश हो या कोई भी प्रदेश हो वहां चीनी बिल्कुल नहीं मिल रही है राशनकार्ड पर । मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली के जरिये जिनके पास राशनकार्ड हैं उनको चीनी दिलाने के लिए क्या व्यवस्था कर रहे हैं ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : The Central Government is distributing PDS sugar as per the quota, to all the States. Regarding allocation and distribution to the PDS shops and ration card holders, it is the duty of the State Governments. If any complaint about any State is coming, we will certainly refer it to that State Government and take action.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Sir, that was not my question. My question was that those who are having ration cards are not getting sugar through ration shops even in Delhi. I am drawing the attention of the Minister to this.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Regarding Delhi also the responsibility of the Central Government is to procure and distribute it to the State Government as per its allotted quota. It is the duty of the State Government to supply it to the rationcard holders through the ration shops.

प्रो. विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा : अलाटिड कोटे के मुताबिक नहीं दे रहे हैं ?

There is a 20 per cent cut in the allotted quota.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Advisory Committee is attached to the Ministry of Civil Supplies and Public Distribution System. In this House and elsewhere also it has been discussed that from the viewpoint of the economy, the subsidy can be reduced. That is why this is the system that we should adopt. But, that is for the Finance Minister.

So far as the Minister of Civil Supplies is concerned, he is keen that the Public Distribution System should be target-oriented and that it should be strengthened. That is why, Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister why, once the Advisory Committee has made the recommendation, there should be such an inordinate delay by the Government of India in taking a decis o on an a'l India basis to ensure that the target groups are really served much more effectively. What are those consideration what are those factors which necessitate such a prolonged considera on on the part of the Ministry before taking a decision in such an urgent matter ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : It is because in the Advisory Committee itself there was no unanimity, and some of the important States have already raised their objections to exclusion of certain categories. So, we want a further dialogue with all the State Governments. India being a federal state, we do not want to take any unilateral decision on a matter concerning the entire population of this country.

Mafias entering Labour Unions

683. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA :
SHRI G. G. SWELL :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that mafias have entered the labour movement, as recently observed in Bombay's biggest textile union RMMS ;

(b) what are the steps taken by Government in legal and administrative spheres to counteract mafias' entry, which destroys trade union democarcy ;

(c) whether Government have enquired that thousands of unions don't hold general body/executive committee meetings and hold no democratic elections ;

(d) whether Government would appoint observers to ensure that

*The question was actually asked on the floo of the House by Shri Chimanbhai Mehta.